

July 2006

DVR Headquarters will be holding an open house in their new facility on August 16th from 4 to 6 pm.

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In the news:

Positive media coverage is one way of creating greater awareness. It recognizes the work that we do and helps promote the outcomes our customers achieve. We have now established a link on our Intranet and Internet sites to highlight when we are In the News. If your local newspaper or community publication shares a customer's success story, covers an event we're involved in or otherwise highlights our efforts, please pass the clipping or link along to us. We will post it so that everyone can enjoy our successes.

Update on our restructuring:

Last Thursday, the state Department of Personnel completed the actions necessary so that we can move forward with our restructuring. That was an important step in the process and very good news!

We have extended the recruitment for the Field Services Administrator position until July 28 and anticipate conducting interviews in mid-August.

In State Office, we are in the process of developing new teams and aligning staff with specific functional areas. As we move forward this summer, staff will be meeting with their new supervisors to review and update their position descriptions.

Senior Leadership Team

Our Senior Leadership Team – which replaces the former “Chiefs Team” - has been established and meets regularly. We will be working together to address organizational issues, creatively problem solve, identify opportunities, develop strategies and analyze our results. Members of the Senior Leadership Team include: Lynnae Rutledge (Director), Don Kay (Special Assistant to the Director), Kelly Boston (Planning and Evaluation Administrator), Lorie Christoferson (Business Services Manager), Paul Cox (Information Services Manager), Kathy Krulich (Executive Assistant) and the yet-to-be hired Field Services Administrator. Depending on the topics to be discussed and issues to be considered, we will often ask other staff to join us.

New Organizational Chart

For those of us who are more visual, I am attaching a copy of the new organizational chart with the functional areas identified.

Staff transitions

With the restructuring, we have a variety of staff that are in the process of assuming new roles and responsibilities. My sincere thanks to each of them – their professionalism, sense of humor, diplomacy and positive attitudes as we’ve navigated this process has been appreciated.

DVR Benefits Planners

Building on the success of our pilot over the past several months, we have recently announced the selection of three staff to provide core benefits planning assistance to our customers. We welcome Jennifer Bean, Karen Heater and Marian Norberg to these permanent roles. We look forward to partnering with and helping to build a sustainable statewide network of benefits planning assistance. Our sincere thanks to Abby Cooper, Christopher Hailey and the other DVR staff who have been involved as we’ve built our benefits planning skills.

Thanks to DVR staff and partners

Over the past several months, we have had the benefit of the time, talent and energy of key staff and partners contributing to several critical workgroups. Our thanks to the:

HRMS Team Genie Ybarra, Paula Cooper, Edna Isaac, Cindy Murray, Jim Matson for their capable assistance as time and attendance processors; Darcy Hliboki, Lorrie Moe,

Kathy Spade for making sure that we were ready for the conversion to HRMS in July; and to Chuck Paeth for the overall project leadership.

IPE Amendments Carl Johnston, Daphne Martin, Anita Brown-Pierce, Deborah De La Fuente, Brian Clark, Jack Lien in working with Michael Cunningham, DVR Policy Analyst on guidance to assist staff in developing plan amendments when there are substantive changes to the plan.

Supported Self-Employment Jim O'Brien, Patrick Raines, Peggy Palys, Jim McBay, Linda Singer, Donald Alvashere; and Joelle Brouner and Martin McCallum from the State Rehabilitation Council working with Michael Cunningham, DVR Policy Analyst on recommendations related to supported self-employment.

Manual Guidance on Identifying VR needs Butch Brodeur, Tina Bredengerd, Mandy Lee, Daren Carstens, Kelly Boston, Terry Redmon, Carrie Wade-Nurse and Joelle Brouner and John Harrison from the State Rehabilitation Council working with Michael Cunningham, DVR Policy Analyst in developing better guidance in the manual about identifying VR needs and providing services that substantially contribute to employment.

Nominations for the 2006 Economic and Workforce Development Awards

The Governor will be convening the 2006 Economic and Workforce Development Conference on September 7th in Vancouver. This will be a great venue for recognizing innovation and excellence in moving Washington forward in the global economy. DVR has worked together with Enterprise for Equity in Olympia and the Workforce Investment Partnership of Clark County to submit nominations in the Workforce Best Practices and Open For Business Awards categories.

In-Services Planned for August

We are finalizing the planning for the action-oriented and timely in-service trainings to be held in each of the three Areas in August. Learning new skills, sharing tools, networking and staff recognition are being built into each session. Plan to attend:

August 16 – 17 Lacey
August 22 – 23 Lynnwood
August 28- 29 Spokane

Current Compliance with Federal Standards and Indicators:

This year, we've assisted 1,523 individuals achieve employment. We continue to meet Standard 1.1 (meet or exceed the number of outcomes achieved last year). Congratulations to customers, employers, staff and partners involved in making this happen!

The rehabilitation rate (percent of all plans that are successful) is now at 45.91%. We must reach 55.8% to pass this important standard. Please continue to share your ideas locally and with me on how we can make positive improvement to our rehabilitation rate with customers currently receiving services.

Next Release from the Waiting List

There currently are 13,673 individuals on the Order of Selection waiting list. Given current resources, we will be able to initiate services to approximately 1,000 individuals from the MSD waiting list in early September. By continuing to improve our business practices, provide more services directly and make responsible case service decisions, we anticipate monthly releases at this level for the next several months.

Washington Recognized as a Leader in Employment

Washington is one of nine U.S. states recognized by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) as a leader in employment of people with disabilities, according to the "Final Report on Best Practices for the Employment of People with Disabilities in State Government Today" (available online at http://www.eeoc.gov/initiatives/nfi/final_states_best_practices_report.html). The report cites the accomplishments of Washington State in providing guidance and reviews for reasonable accommodation policies, establishing a reasonable accommodation loan fund, and Braille and taping access centers, among several other accomplishments as examples of best practices.

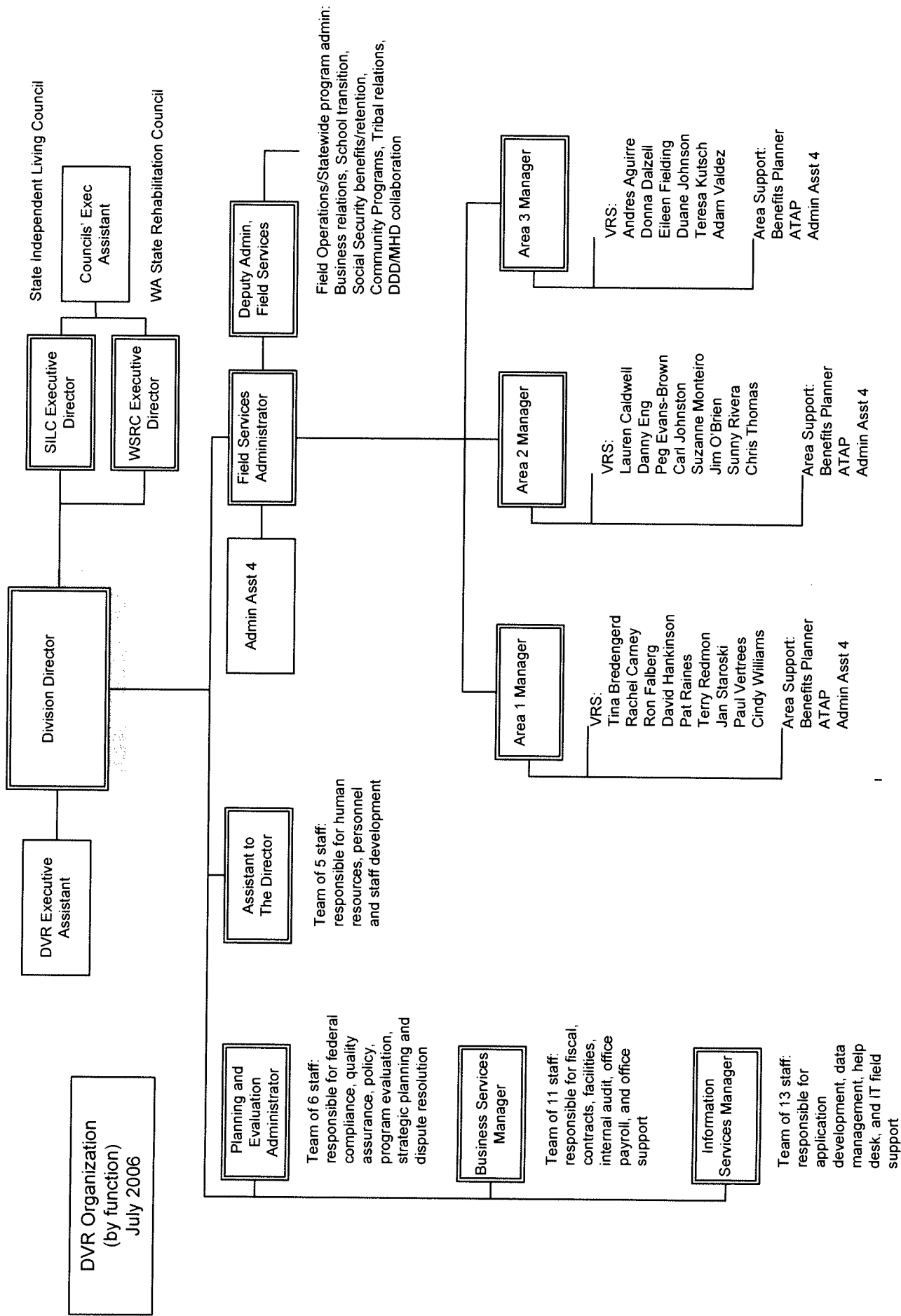
After hearing the news, Governor Gregoire congratulated state leaders and stated "I am committed to continuing the practices and policies that recognize the talents of people with disabilities and to put those talents to work delivering services to the people of this state."

Final Thoughts:

As always, I appreciate the work that you do and your passion for improving our services.

Thank you –
Lynnae Rutledge
Director, Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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Phone: (360) 725-3610



OPEN HOUSE

Come see our new office space!

**4565 7th Ave SE, 1st Floor
Lacey WA 98503**

Department of Services for the Blind
(DSB) (360) 725-3836

DSHS/Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
(DVR) 1-800-637-5627 or (360) 725-3618

State Independent Living Council (SILC)
1-866-252-2939 or (360) 725-3692

WA State Rehabilitation Council (WSRC)
1-866-252-2939 or (360) 725-3692

Date: **August 16th 2006**

Time: **4:00 to 6:00 pm**
(4:45p Brief Overview
Presentation)

Light refreshments
Interpreters on site
Door Prize

**Washington State Department
of Services for the Blind**



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